

Elaine Cardenas
Library 715
Budget Philosophy Statement
7/1/10

St. Matthew's Parish School enrolls 325 students in grades PS-8. The school is tied to the parish; they work in partnership with one another. The school is situated in Pacific Palisades which is an affluent suburb of Los Angeles. One major recommendation from our last CAIS/WASC evaluation was to put forth more effort to diversify the student body, faculty and staff. The student body, faculty and staff are primarily Caucasian. More importantly, the majority of families are well-off economically. Students applying to the school must take an entrance exam. The students as well as the parents are interviewed before being considered for enrollment. The first consideration for acceptance is membership in the parish. Another consideration is if there is already a sibling in the school.

The funding for the library program has always been generous. I have never had a need to "apply" for funds. As long as I can justify the expenditure I have been able to buy what I need. I do all the ordering for the library. I keep track of resource use as much as possible. Some of the information is subjective to a certain extent. Other information is more specific. For example, Teaching Books, one of our online subscriptions, actually emails us usage statistics regularly.

I use a variety of sources to decide what to purchase. Of course, I use professional publications such as *Horn Book*, *School Library Journal*, or *Titlewave* as aids to develop book purchasing lists. I place major orders several times a year. As I find titles I want to purchase, I add them to my current Titlewave list. Every several months I order what I have on the list. For more immediate needs, I use Amazon. We have a corporate account with Amazon. In our library, we have "book request forms" for the kids. If there's a particular book a student wants they complete the form and give it to me. If it's something that makes sense for our library, I will put it on the Amazon list. Often the requests are for the latest and greatest. For example, I've already pre-ordered Suzanne Collins third installment for the Hunger Games series which comes out in August. By in large, our students are all readers. We have kids that are ordering books from Amazon UK in order to get them ASAP because the titles may be released sooner overseas. I also use recommendations from peers. Our local library group meets and makes recommendations regarding books. Another source for me is Kathy Baxter. I met Kathy Baxter years ago at a workshop. She writes for *School Library Journal*. Typically I see her at the CSLA conference in the fall. She reviews, then book talks nonfiction books. She's an excellent source for nonfiction recommendations. She is an interesting lady who has served on the Newbery committee. Kathy likes to "second-guess" who is going to win the Newbery before it's announced. She keeps a spreadsheet of books which have been reviewed by various publications. In her spreadsheet she tracks how many starred reviews each book gets. Her spreadsheet is also a useful tool when considering books to order. I'm grateful that she is so generous about sharing her spreadsheet.

This year we are working on updating our reference collection. At the moment, our reference collection is in serious need of an overhaul. I'm really torn about what to do here. So much can be found online. Reference books are expensive and quickly dated. I'm thinking about maybe investing more in online reference than actual books. We have a fairly extensive list of online resources we use now, but I think we could improve our resources here. We subscribe to World Book Online, eLibrary, Social Studies Fact Cards (love this resource), as well as several others.

The majority of books in our collection are hard cover. We do have some paper. Often we order paper for the Middle School students because they tend to haul around very heavy backpacks. In addition to books our library houses a variety of media. We have audio books, periodicals, and DVDs.